

# The Cools and the Nerds

## POPULARITY

Conformity, popularity, acceptance, and peer pressure—your kids need to talk about these ideas in a fun and creative way. To do that divide into two groups, including in each group at least one student who can draw or sketch. Once the groups are settled at separate tables with a drawing pad and marking pens, tell one group that they are the “Cools” and the other group that they are the “Nerds.” Ask the Cools draw a picture of someone who is really cool—a stereotype of everything that is currently in. Ask the Nerds to draw a picture of someone who is totally out of it—a nerd.

Post completed pictures for judging by an impartial jury (sponsors, maybe) on the basis of accuracy, humor, creativity, etc. List on the blackboard or on poster board some characteristics of a cool person and a nerdy person. See the side bar for some examples.

Next, discuss the following questions, or other questions of your choice:

1. What is the coolest thing you ever did? The nerdiest?

2. Why are items on the cool list and not the other list accepted by the crowd? What's wrong with the things on the nerdy list?

3. What's wrong with the cool list?

4. What do we want to be cool? Why is it so important?

5. Is conformity good or bad? Always

### Cool

Not taking school work home  
Wearing a game jersey  
Sports  
Owning a car  
Cutting class  
Smoking, drinking  
Dating  
Swearing  
Eating junk food for lunch

### Nerdy

Wearing rain boots to school  
Girls carrying a purse  
Guys carrying a briefcase  
Going to church or Sunday School  
Dressing up  
Being driven by parents on a date  
Bringing lunch in a lunch pail  
Golf

good or always bad?

6. What are the dangers of conformity?

7. Where do you find the most pressure to conform?

8. What does the Bible say about conformity? What does it mean?

Wrap up the discussion with some thoughts from Scripture, using passages such as Romans 12:1-2, which deal with conformity. Illustrate the concept of standing alone with heroes of the faith (such as Noah) who had to take a lot of ridicule from the crowd, but knew that they were right. The supreme example,

of course, was Jesus. John 7:5 says that even his brothers rejected him. Encourage your young people to pinpoint one problem area where they can begin to break away from the crowd a little bit and live for Christ's approval, not the world's.